

Military International HIV Training Program (MIHTP)

Dear Doctors:

We all are looking forward to your arrival and participation in the training program here in San Diego. The four-week program will provide:

- Education and training in HIV clinical and ARV therapy management in a large university setting
- Clinical management of opportunistic infections
- Laboratory diagnostics for the clinician
- Practical epidemiology skills with emphasis on study design, research methodology, and statistics
- Exposure to programs within a large military hospital and HIV clinic
- Clinical database set-up and maintenance instruction

Luggage and Travel:

- Check with your airlines to determine the international and US weight limits before you pack your luggage. The weight allowance on most international flights is 31.8 kg per bag and the national (US) weight limit is 22.7 kg per bag. Exceeding the weight limits may cost you up to \$100 USD per bag.
- No sharp objects or aerosol cans are allowed on international or domestic flights; those items will be confiscated. Your bags must be intact without rips or tears. We recommend you place your name, address, and telephone number of where you will be staying while in San Diego (and your home information upon your return) inside each bag in case your luggage tag on the outside of your bags gets torn or removed.
- Allow at least 2 hours before your departure time to get through different security checkpoints, whether at US and international airports. Please be sure that your bags are ticketed and checked through all the way to San Diego, your final destination. You **MUST** pick up your bags, however, from baggage claim in the first city you land in within the United States (ie, Atlanta, Chicago, New York, Washington, DC) and go through customs. Once you have cleared customs, your bags will then continue on to San Diego. The airport will provide guidance through the custom process. Ask your American Embassy contact for any international traveling particulars of which they may be aware.
- It is recommended that you bring double the amount of any prescribed medication you will be taking. Carry these medications with you onto the plane, along with all other valuables.
- Pack an extra toothbrush and a change of clothes in your carry-on bag, in case of unexpected delays or lost luggage.
- Flight recommendations: Sleep during your longer flight periods. Many people can experience dehydration or sinus flare-ups. Drink plenty of fluid. Use sleep medication and also an anti-inflammatory or decongestant/antihistamine to prevent sinus congestion and headaches. Get out of your seat and walk the aisles every 3 to 4 hours during your flight to prevent leg vein thrombosis.

Arrival:

- Lodging: **Sommerset Suites Hotel**
606 Washington Avenue
San Diego, CA 92102
Telephone: 001-619-692-5200

- Call Sommerset Suites when you arrive at the San Diego Airport. They will send a van to pick you up, if you arrive before 2000. If you arrive after 2000, you will need to take a taxicab to the hotel. MIHTP staff will greet you at the baggage claim area prior to your transport to the hotel.
- Sommerset Suites Hotel is within walking distance of the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) offices, clinics, and hospital, where much of your training will take place. You will receive taxicab vouchers for official training traveling needs.
- Your room will include a refrigerator, dishwasher, stove, microwave oven, coffee maker, clothes iron and hair dryer. A continental breakfast and afternoon snack are served daily. Grocery stores, a drug store, restaurants, and delicatessens are within easy walking distance of the hotel.

Communication:

- A telephone and fax machine will be available at your hotel for a charge, though local and 1-800 calls are free. High-speed Internet connection service is also available for a fee, reimbursed at the end of your stay. Consult the hotel staff at the front desk about charges for the use of these devices.
- We recommend that you purchase **international telephone cards** and use them to pay for long distance calls in your hotel room. Arrangements for purchasing telephone cards from a local vendor will be provided. Your family can call you directly by calling the main hotel number (001-619-692-5200) and asking the hotel operator for you by name. Each hotel room has voice mail where a message left can be retrieved by you upon return to your room.
- We request that you make any international telephone calls to your home offices or medical centers from the Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCSD) or the UCSD office. Using direct hotel telephones is very expensive.
- You will have telephone, fax machine, and e-mail access as well through your assigned office both at UCSD and NMCSD. When dialing from outside of the United States, the office fax number is 001-619-298-1379, and the office telephone number for UCSD is 001-619-543-5023. At NMCSD, the office number is 001-619-532-7590.

Orientation:

- Usually on the first Thursday or Friday here, you will receive a Military International HIV Training Program orientation at NMCSD. There will also be an orientation at UCSD. You will be assigned an office at both training centers along with a computer for your personal use. A detailed agenda for the 4-week training course will be provided upon your arrival.
- When you arrive in the middle of the week prior to orientation, there are several local sights to which the hotel van may provide transportation upon request and availability for a minimum charge.

Expenses:

- We recommend that you budget \$350 USD per week to cover the cost of meals, transportation (taxicabs), and entertainment.
- You will have several weekends in which to visit some of the sights around San Diego. A trip to Sea World is a popular full-day excursion. Navy coordinators can assist you in purchasing reduced-price tickets (at least one week in advance). Pamphlets about local attractions are provided at your hotel.
- The travel advance, given to you by the American Embassy in your country BEFORE you depart, will be used to pay for all of your meals and incidental expenses while in the United States. No monies will be given in San Diego unless previously arranged.

- A staff member may offer ahead of time to pay for a lunch or dinner; but otherwise you will be expected to pay for your daily meals.
- Your lodging expense will be paid for by the Naval Health Research Center. Educational supplies (paper, notebooks, pens, pencils, and photocopies) will be provided at your temporary office. We will also provide you with all textbooks and computer media (CD-ROMs) needed for the training course.

Scheduled Time:

- Please be on time for the morning training sessions during the week. The walk from the hotel to the training offices/clinics takes approximately 10–15 minutes. Occasionally, you will be transported to other facilities by program personnel, or by taxicab with vouchers, for part of the day's agenda.
- If, during your stay, you plan to leave the San Diego area, please provide the Navy coordinators with the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) you will be visiting and/or place(s) you will be staying. Weekends have been left unplanned.

Identification:

- For your own safety and security, please keep identification with you at all times. It is best to carry two forms of picture identification (thus, please bring your **military ID card** and your passport). Your military ID will also let you go to military base commissaries.
- Carry a **copy of your international travel orders** (ITOs), especially when being driven onto military bases here in California.

Directions to UCSD:

- The Antiviral Research Center (AVRC) is located at 150 West Washington Street, 5 blocks west of the hotel at Front Street. The UCSD training office is within 2 blocks of your hotel at 3900 5th Avenue, Suite 200 (2nd Floor). The hotel van begins operation at 0730 daily; with prior arrangements, it may take you to other locations such as NMCS, UCSD's Owen Clinic, or the UCSD Medical Center.

Clothing:

- Daytime temperatures in San Diego are mild (15–25° C), but can become cool (5–10° C) in the evenings. We suggest that you pack both long- and short-sleeved shirts, along with sweater(s) and a light jacket. Weather in San Diego may include a mixture of fog and rain as well as warmer weather. Layering lightweight clothing is an effective way to keep warm. There are coin-operated laundry machines at the hotel for your use and dry cleaners nearby.
- **Military uniforms will not be worn** while in the United States.
- Given the amount of walking you will do, please be sure to wear comfortable walking shoes.
- **Bring one of your white jackets** for hospital rounding and clinic observation (your stethoscope is optional, though some like to have it available).

Medical Credentials and CV:

- **We need copies of your medical license/certification and your CV as soon as possible.** They are entered and processed through the UCSD Medical Center system prior to your visit. Please fax them to the Program Director at 001-619-553-8383 at your earliest convenience.

Needs Assessment:

- **There are several sheets in a file attachment that need to be filled out as soon as possible.** This information will help us make sure your stay is beneficial for you. These sheets should be faxed (or e-mailed electronically) to the Program Director as soon as possible. The fax number is 001-619-553-8383. If you fax these sheets, please e-mail the Program Director at (mihtp@nhrc.navy.mil) so he will know to look for them.

Conference Call:

- After the Needs Assessments are returned, we will set up a conference call where you may call in from the American Embassy or another designated location prior to your departure to the United States. We would like to have personal contact with you, giving us both a chance to ask questions and clarify any concerns you may have. We often arrange the call around 0730–0800 our time when possible.

Presentations:

- You are encouraged to give a formal or informal presentation in your area of expertise to groups of physicians, researchers, educators, or doctoral students during your stay in San Diego. Let us know if you wish to do so as soon as possible for scheduling purposes. Please bring any pictures, 35-mm slides, view foils, or PowerPoint files you would like to use to assist you in sharing your knowledge on HIV-related topics, other infectious diseases, or your experiences with disease within your country and military setting. We encourage each of you to bring 2–3 interesting or difficult case studies for group discussion with training staff and mutual learning.

Please contact the Program Director for the training course at commercial 001-619-553-8398; e-mail mihtp@nhrc.navy.mil to obtain further contact information for MIHTP personnel who can address questions regarding your arrival, training, or presentation.

Please review additional information about MIHTP at the following Web addresses:

<http://www.hivtraining.ucsd.edu> and
<http://www.nhrc.navy.mil/programs/dhapp/training/introduction.html>

If there are any problems (especially en route), please contact the Program Director on his cell phone **(001-619-913-5095)**. You may want to bring this letter with you for reference when you travel.

Sincerely,

Military International HIV/AIDS
Training Program Director